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LAYS AND
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C. G. Anderson



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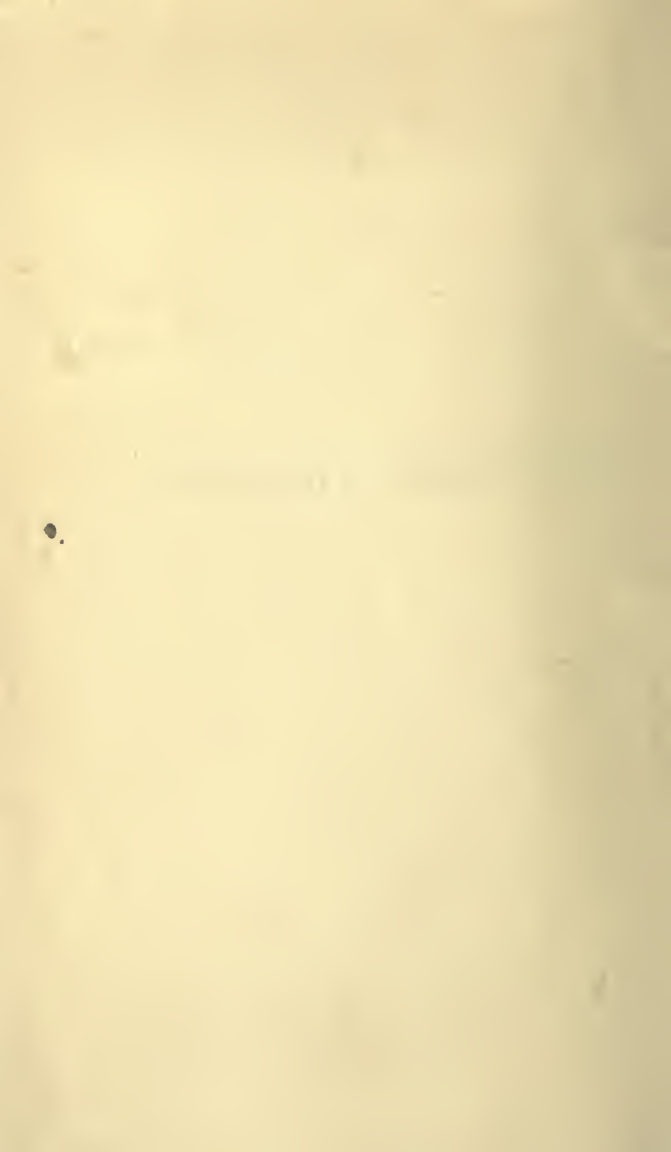
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LAYS AND LEGENDS



LAYS AND LEGENDS

BY

C. G. ANDERSON

(*Author of 'Thyme and Thistledown' and 'With
Lute and Viol'*)

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FRANCIS GRIFFITHS

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EASTERN ECHOES

Reincarnation

HERE at my feet there resteth Meryt-ra ;
 Swathed in a rose-hued shroud her body lies,
 Gold on her brow, and round each slender
 wrist

Bracelets inwrought with fine-cut amethyst.
 Whither has fled the *Ka* of Meryt-ra,
 Who danced within the Hall of Butterflies ?

Long have I sought it through the vaulted
 gloom\

Of chambers decked with painted traceries
 Of bird and lotus, where strange shadows fall
 From crumbling porch or carven capital.
 By what cold daïs, o'er what sculptured
 tomb,

Hovers her spirit now in trembling guise ?

Once more I turn, to see the Nile sweep blue
 Beyond these walls, and there, in sudden wise
 My quest is ended, for a maiden stands
 Holding a *balla* in her outstretched hands.
 The soul of Meryt-ra, re-born anew,
 Looks laughing outwards from her sloe-
 black eyes.

Hussein the camel-sheik hath ridden far
To fill her pitcher where the clear springs rise
And rainbow bubbles break about its brim.

O scribe, depart, nor wreak thy wrath on
him !

What glance for thee, save scorn, hath
Meryt-ra,

Who danced within the Hall of Butterflies ?

The Sheikh's Bride

I HAVE closed the gates of the West behind
me ;

The gates of the East—do they stand ajar ?
Across their threshold thy hand hath signed
me,

Selim, Selim Abenamar.

Thy summons wakened my soul from
sleeping ;

I left the land where my kindred are,
They could not stay me with wrath or
weeping,—

Nor might they prison by bolt or bar
The heart held captive within thy keeping,
Selim, Selim Abenamar.

I see thee stand where the palm-tree swayeth
Beneath the light of a single star ;
Amid the branches the night-wind strayeth
But one last gleam from the West still
playeth

Athwart the sheath of thy scimitar.

Thy tethered charger impatient, neigheth ;
I hear thy call, that my soul obeyeth—

‘Mount ; haste thee, mount !’—though
 the world gainsayeth,
I come, O Selim Abenamar—

The city sleeps, while the moon sinks dying
 Behind the tents of the still bazaar ;
 From out the desert a voice comes crying—
 The distant howl of the pariah—
 In long-drawn echo, to mock my sighing,
Selim, Selim Abenamar.

The gates of the East they have closed
 behind me ;
 The gates of the West, they stand fast
 and far.
 Rent is love’s veil, that no more may
 blind me.
 But the chain once forged shall be strong
 to bind me,
Selim, Selim Abenamar.

Mahomet's Sentinel

STILL is the camp, and darkened stands the
 bower
 Where he whose wrath hath slain the
 Koreishite
 Within the vale of Naklah, and whose might
 Once stayed yon moon above the Caabah's
 tower
 Sleepeth before the fight.

Alone, beside the ford, I watch and wake.
 Shall not the hosts of Abu-Jahl ride fast?
 By token of the dried date-kernels cast,
 Have they not learnt the road our feet have
 passed?
 At Beder's stream they halt, their thirst to
 slake,
 Ere sounds the trumpet's blast.

What stirs the tamarisk beneath the hill?
 Lurketh there not the glint of steel behind?
 A shadow leaps—my spear its mark shall
 find!
 A cry—then silence—but the rising wind,
 And the cicala's note that grateth shrill
 Mourns him whose eyes are blind.

Spurned by my kinsmen from their roof
 and race,
 Have I not paid again the debt I owe
 Unto the utmost *dinar*?—even so!
 Once more I look upon my brother's face,
 First fallen of the foe.

.
Mohammed Ibn Abdallah ! now doth ring
 E'en to their ranks our war-cry menacing.
Allah ill 'Allah !—now shalt thou arise,
 O Prophet, Lord and Seer, and red dust fling,
 Whirled by the blast athwart the rending
 skies,
 Whence to our aid the hosts of heaven
 shall speed.

Haizum ! Haizum ! what rein may curb that
 steed
 Whose hoofs strike flame, before whose
 nostrils' breath
 Their squadrons scatter like the desert sand ?
 Behind his track who rides the ways of death
 We press exultant, mindful of his word—
 'The gates of Paradise shall open stand,
 When o'er them rests the shadow of the
 sword !'

The Prophecy of Queen Akaluka

(*Egypt—Ethiopian Dynasty, 748-664 B.C.*)

THE Queen uprose from the royal feast,
And she lifted the bow on high ;
To South and North, and to West and East
Four arrows sped, from the string released.
Then spake she in prophecy :—
‘Taharqa, my son, at thy throne’s right hand
Now Egypt crowns thee, thou bidd’st me stand.
By yon shaft’s token, each goodly land
Before thee shall captive lie.

‘The East shall fashion thee vessels wrought
In ebon and juniper ;
White carven pillars to grace thy court,
And apes and leopards therein to sport
Thy galleons shall claim of her.
And I will deck me in raiment bright,
With chains of jasper and malachite,
And pigeons’ plumes be my couch by night
Made sweet with the scent of myrrh.

‘The North shall yield thee the spoils of war ;
Her cohorts shall flee in dread
Before the sweep of thy scimitar,
Till e’en the cities of proud Shinar
Shall quake at thy legions’ tread.

And I will ride, while the shouting swells
 'Mid sound of sistrum and clash of bells,
 With princes clanking in manacles
 Behind me in triumph led.

'The West shall grant thee a crown of peace ;
 The harvest of field and vine
 Her sons shall bear thee in rich increase,
 With oil of *ani*, and white rams' fleece,
 And cassia and mer-wood fine,
 And I will greet them with song and mirth,
 For a righteous king doth behold more
 worth
 In the ploughshare's spoil than the red
 sword's dearth,
 And brighter than blood runs wine.

'But the gift of the South shall be most
 to thee,
 For the South shall send thee a bride,
 From a Theban palace ariseth she
 Whose eyes more dark than the sloe shall be,
 Her lips by no henna dyed.
 And I will go hence, in an hour grown less
 Than her fleetest smile, or her lightest tress,
 And the end of my days shall be bitterness
 And dust of a shattered pride !'

The Song of Lalla Tahara

WHERE thou hast passed between the trees,
Haroun, Haroun,
 What hast thou left me?—even these,
 One rose of June
 Crushed by the hand that let it fall
 The echo of a flute's faint call,
 Thy shadow brooding over all—
Haroun, Haroun.

While the mute fountain tranquil lies,
Haroun, Haroun,
 Thine image from the depths doth rise,
 Yet stirreth soon
 Thy sudden laughter through its springs,
 Whereto mine own responsive rings
 With all unseemly echoings,
Haroun, Haroun.

Amid the Soko's close thronged space,
Haroun, Haroun.
 I seek the semblance of thy face,
 And when at noon
 The fakir sounds the tom-tom's beat,
 I follow down the sun-scorched street,
 For to one measure pace his feet,
Haroun, Haroun.

From the mosque roof the call to prayer
(Haroun, Haroun,)

Drones forth ; I may not enter there,
 Nor crave such boon,
 Yet, hidden in its portal's shade,
 May not my burning steps be stayed,
 Awhile to linger, unafraid ?

Haroun, Haroun.

Ash-white against the sunset's flame,
Haroun, Haroun,
 The wheeling pigeons call thy name
 With ceaseless croon ;
 Would I might choke them dumb, ere yet
 They light on yonder minaret !
 Would for an hour I might forget,
Haroun, Haroun !

Curved like thy sheathless scimitar,
Haroun, Haroun,
 Yon moon's keen crescent cleaves the bar
 Of sleep or swoon,
 And bids me rise from dreams of death,
 While, borne upon the desert's breath,
 I hear thy steed that gallopeth,
Haroun, Haroun.

Thy lips their tale shall likewise tell,
Haroun, Haroun,
 E'en as the throbbing drum doth swell
 The guimbry's tune.

As pants the thirsting earth for rain,
For sight of thee mine eyes are fain,
And surely thou shalt come again,

Haroun, Haroun.

Yea ! for an hour we twain shall meet,

Haroun, Haroun,

Where twines the jasmine, silver-sweet
Beneath the moon :—

Then will I slay thee secretly,
In that I would my soul may be
No more thus subject unto thee,

Haroun, Haroun !

The Farewell of Abd-el-Zamil

WE who have watched the swift stray
meteors falling

Over the roof-tops where the moon dips low,
Shall we not hear again the song that dieth
When from the mosque the sleepless Imam
crieth ?

Deaf grows thine ear ; one woman's clear
voice calling

Bids thee return, that erstwhile bade thee go.

We who have spurred o'er Hasa's plain
together,

Strong as the sea, our course flecked white
with foam,

Say, shall the fleet gazelle await our slaying ?
Bideth the *kata's* flight for thy delaying ?

Slack falls thy rein ; a hand hath grasped
its tether,

Turning thee westward, as the tide turns
home.

We who have dreamed the dreams that are
not spoken,

Born of the smoke, that snake-like coil and
cling,

Languid with scent of nard and opium
 blending,
 May not our souls lie lost in peace unending ?
 Faint fades the spell a dream of old hath
 broken,
 Whence thou shalt waken, still remembering.

Thou shalt go hence, and on thy lips be
 laughter,—
 Scorn of the years that manhood's garb have
 wrought,
 Out from the threads of youth's light vesture
 woven,
 Yet shall their woof endure, till this be
 proven—
 Shall not the East arise and follow after,
 Strongest at last to claim what she hath
 sought ?

Shall not the rusted chain at length be riven ?
Standeth the tree whose roots are cleft in twain ?
 Dim are mine eyes, yet still have they
 beholden
 Yonder the Gate of Promise shining golden.
 Ere yet my bones unto the dust be given,
 Haply thy feet shall stir it once again !

The Requital of Jerioth

O PRIEST of Baal,
 Who servest in the shadow of the grove,
 Lies there no fairer way before thy feet?
 Doth not the henna flower bear scent more
 sweet
 Than oil of incense, and the turtle-dove
 With song prevail?

Yea, even thou
 Hast heard her note; what need is thine of
 plea?
 Dost thou but seek me at the temple gate
 To din mine ears with babble of vain prate?
 Go hence again; what art thou unto me—
 What art thou now?

No more arrayed
 In priestly garb of white-robed holiness,
 Lit by the crescent of a new-horned moon,
 But pale and shrunk, thou creepest now at
 noon;
 I deemed thee more than man, but thou art
 less
 Who thus obeyed.

Yet turn not twice
 To Baal or Ashtoreth, to purge thy shame
 With blood of slaughtered bullocks there
 besprent,
 Or with thy tears o'erflowing in lament,
 Which shall but further quench the sunken
 flame
 Of sacrifice.

Seek thou elsewhere
 A stronger God than these thou didst forsake ;
 Yet is it meet that they should still be mine—
 Yea ! I will kneel before them at the shrine
 I bade thee scorn, so may I haply make
 Atonement there.

The Pilgrimage of Assad

‘ FAIN for mine evil deeds would I atone
Before my spirit hence its flight shall take ! ’
Thus, bowed with toil and years, Assad
made moan.

From shrouded skies, the voice of Brahmah
spake—

‘ Seek thou the Ganges’ stream, and bathe
therein ;

So shall thy soul be purified from sin.’

He rose, and like one wandering in a dream
Down the parched valley fared ; a brook
he spied.

Straightway he plunged therein. ‘ O sacred
stream,

Render me free from taint of earth ! ’ he cried.
But as to mount the farther shore he strove,
A herdsman’s laughter mocked him from
above.

‘ O fool ! ’ he railed, ‘ what dotard’s prank
is thine

To wallow on yon banks beslimed with weed,
And muddied by the trampling of the kine
That hither I at noon for pasture lead ?

No hallowed waters these, to cleanse from
stain

Body or soul ; go ! get thee home again !'

'Have I then failed ?' Assad sighed wearily,
And bent his steps not homeward, but afar
Through plain and jungle. Oft he thought
to see

Revealed to him his longed for Avatar ;
But each time learned the waters that he
sought

Lay still beyond, their miracle unwrought.

Till at the last, one close of day he came
To where a lordly river seaward rolled,
Studded with sails like jewels 'neath the flame
Of skies that shone with amethyst and gold—
And by whose brink, 'mid perfumed branches
set,

Rose dome of mosque and spire of minaret.

But as to gain the margin he essayed,
A shadow rose between him and the sun ;
'Depart, oh death ! a little space !' he prayed
'Claim me not now, until my goal be won !'
Yet vain his anguish ; on that shining shore
Strength failed him, and he sank to rise no more.

The scent of champak and of tamarind
Grew faint and far ; in mist before his eyes
Earth faded like a scene long left behind.

But clear a mystic summons called ' Arise !
 Five times the sacred river o'er thee passed ;
 Enter thou in unto my peace at last ! '

Trembling he cried—' O Brahmah, lord
 most dread

Rend me with wrath, but not with mockery !
 Five times in error were my footsteps led
 To sullied streams not hallowed unto thee.
 Curséd am I, beholding Truth too late ! '
 Then spake the god to him compassionate—

' Great was thy faith ; upon thee is bestowed
 The pardon thou hast sorely toiled to win,
 In thine own heart the healing waters flowed
 Stronger than earthly tide to cleanse thy sin.
 Sorrow no more ; Nirvâna crowns thy quest ;
 Where all streams seek their bourne, find
 thou thy rest ! '

The Sultana's Wraith

(The massacre of the Abencerrages, indirectly resulting in the downfall of Granada, is said to have been inspired by the jealousy of Bobadil, to whom courtiers reported that the Sultana had flung a spray of oleander at the feet of the leader Albin-Hamad. The allusion in the last verse refers to the sculptured Hand and Key on the Gate of Justice. The prophecy runs that when this Hand shall grasp this Key, the walls of the Alhambra will be shattered, and the glory of Spain will depart.)

THROUGH thy boughs one sunbeam splendid,
Linderaja, Linderaja,
 Like a cleaving sword descended
 O'er the path whereon strode he—
 Albin-Hamad, lord most vaunted
 'Mid the Moslem host undaunted
 That Granada's walls defended.
Linderaja, woe is me !

There alone I watched him wander,
Linderaja, Linderaja,
 And one spray of oleander,
 Half in jest, half heedlessly,
 At his feet I flung unbidden,
 Recking not of glances hidden—
 Evil tongues that whispered slander.
Linderaja, woe is me !

By no flaming love's mad token

(Linderaja, Linderaja)

Hath your doom been sealed and spoken,

Flower of Islam's chivalry !

And a kingdom's glory shattered

Like the crimson petals scattered

From one blossom lightly broken ;

Linderaja, woe is me !

Till yon crescent's fiery dawning,

Linderaja, Linderaja,

Marks the hour of wrath and warning

When the Hand shall grasp the Key,

Till these walls to dust be riven,

Must my soul abide unshriven

In their shade, nor cease from mourning

Linderaja, woe is me !

VARIED VERSES

The King's Largesse

(Robert the Pious. France, A.D. 996-1031.)

'ALL hail ! O King whose majesty
We greet with flowers, and guard with steel,
While through our clamour breaks the cry—
"Largesse ! Largesse !"—their plea who
kneel

With miser fingers forward thrust
To seize the ducats as they meet
In golden rain the trampled dust
Spurned by thy palfrey's restive feet.

They grasp their fill ; their lean lips laugh—
'See how yon wittol gaping stands !'
Yet shall the gain be mine, the chaff
Be theirs who grope with eager hands,
For I have followed in the train
Of those who touched thy mantle's hem
Nor have mine eyes beheld in vain
The splendour of thy diadem.

The harp attuned to swell thy praise,
The sword made keen thy foes to smite,
The homage that exalts my days—
Though such be worthless in thy sight

Whose realm shall reach the utmost earth,
 Yet these thy gifts I laud and sing ;
 My soul, thus quickened into birth,
 Doth render thanks to thee, my King ! ’

*Frail scion of a regal line
 Unlearned in all that thou hast taught
 Grant him the gifts that are not thine,
 But, at thy peril, count them naught !
 While trumpets twain, from out thy tower
 Challenge and triumph vaunt and prove,
 The first proclaims thy love of power,
 The last, thy people's power of love.*

Recuerdo

‘COME, let us seek the old and happy
country ;
Far have I roved, yet found no land so fair ;
Weary am I of winds that waft me vagrant,
Let us return to yonder valleys fragrant,
Where once we loved, for peace shall find
us there.’

‘Nay ! for my ship hath long lain moored
in haven ;
Green weed and grey have gathered round
her prow,
Wrack of the tides that ebbd to there
forsake her,
Rusted her keel, unmeet for shoal or
breaker ;
Strive not, I pray, to steer her seaward now.’

‘Have you not seen the sunlight o’er the
forest ?
Do you not hear the birds and breezes call ?’
‘Yea, but I dread the rising mist that
showeth
Dim through the leaves, where autumn’s
splendour gloweth ;
Take me not near, lest at a touch they fall.’

‘Have you no heed for all we vowed afore-
time ?

Are they forgot,—the ways wherein we met ?’

‘You have roamed long, o’er land and ocean
ranging,

But in my sight yon coast hath stood
unchanging,

Ask me then not, my friend, if *I* forget !

‘Let it remain a golden shore whose promise
Dreams shall fulfil, nor brave the seas
between,

Since all too soon October’s rose must
wither,

Better our hearts alone should journey
thither,

Whispering still—“Perchance it might have
been !”’

The Toll

WHEREWITH shall Springtide pay,
 When Time's grey gateway, all too long
 concealed
 By briar and blossom, stands at last revealed ?
 Tears such as end perchance an April day
 She needs must yield.

What toll hath Summer borne ?
 The crimson petals of a rose let fall,
 Late gathered from her scattered festival.
 Her lips smile triumph, but her heart shall
 mourn
 Her broken thrall.

When Autumn comes, arrayed
 In mist-veiled vesture, wrought and seamed
 with gold,
 Shall not her chilly fingers loose their hold,
 And nathless dole reluctant tribute paid
 For days all told ?

Bereft doth winter creep ;
 What can be claimed of her, save memory ?
 Yet shall her gift not unrequited lie ;
 Her feet alone may find the path where sleep
 Shall still her sigh.

From One Generation

AROUND me the shadow of pines falleth
quiet ;

No breath breaks their shelter, yet nathless
I see

The quiver that stirs through the sapling,
and showeth

The strength of the storm as it overhead
bloweth.

Say—thou who hast followed the path of
its riot,

What cry, O my son, hath it borne unto
thee ?

It calleth thee hence, but to me may be
spoken

No word of the summons which peals from
the height,

For slowly the growth of the woodlands
hath thickened

To deaden such echoes ; mine ears are not
quicken'd,

And, viewed through the gap that thy foot-
steps have broken,

The hills thou wouldst scale seem but clouds
to my sight.

Long have I ploughed, that thy limbs might
 know leisure,
 Yet e'en by such toil, of itself rendered
 vain,
 This heritage also bequeathed to thy
 keeping—
 The pride which rejecteth the grain of my
 reaping—
 The scorn of thy youth, that would scatter
 its treasure
 Like chaff to the winds—till they sow it
 again.

Go forth, and go freely !—for silence is fitter
 Than counsel which irks thee, but shall not
 prevail.
 Nay ! feign not regret, lest thy words should
 ring hollow ;
 This only I charge thee—from one who
 shall follow,
 Withhold not this boon, though the granting
 be bitter—
 The right to achieve—and the freedom to
 fail.

When he thou hast reared in the shade of
 thy rafter
 The slant of its beam hath in stature out-
 grown,
 When the speech of thy sorrow is sport for
 his railing,

And the work of thy hands in his sight
unavailing,
Thus then shalt thou pay, as he leaves thee
with laughter,
The price of the gift thou hast claimed for
thine own.

Interlude

‘LADY, in your lonely hours,
 Doth yon breeze that stirs the flowers
 Unto you no tidings tell ?
 Breathes it naught of him who lingers
 Where the eglantine’s frail fingers
 Bend and beckon from the towers
 Of the Villa Silvabelle ?’

‘If the palm whose roots are planted
 Far beyond these walls enchanted
 Feel a zephyr’s breath impel
 To and fro some frond that strayeth
 O’er their confines—what gainsayeth ?
 By no storm-wind’s echo haunted
 Stand the groves of Silvabelle.

‘What of her who steps sedately
 Underneath the cedars stately ?
 Ask you if I scorn her spell ?
 I will bid him give her greeting,
 While she sorrows that our meeting
 Still delayeth, since so greatly
 Winds the road to Silvabelle.

‘What of these, the gift she sendeth—
 Roses whose each petal blendeth
 Tint of pearl and pink sea-shell ?

While he tarries, I will wear them,
Then, as leaf from leaf I tear them,
Small yet sharp, the thorn that rendeth
Greets me thence—from Silvabelle.

‘ Though he yield me love’s full measure ;
Naught she taketh from its treasure
(Ask no more—I know it well).
Yet the hours make weary whiling,
And my lips grow stiff with smiling,
While her laughter lights his leisure
At the Villa Silvabelle.’

Without are Dogs ?

BEYOND a graveyard's measure,
 By the far wall lies
 One little plot ye treasure
 Till your star shall rise.
 O ye whose last cold kennel
 Gleams grey 'mid dock and fennel,
 Have you never part nor pleasure
 In our Paradise ?

Are ye lost, beyond our praying,
 Whom we still hold dear ?
 Do your voices echo, baying
 Or made shrill with fear ?
 From the Saint who guards yon city
 Ye may beg in vain for pity ;
 To the East his thoughts are straying,
 And he will not hear.

So seek him not, but rather
 By the western gate
 Where your friends the children gather,
 It were best to wait ;
 Through the cloud-fringed curtains shining,
 Should they haply hear you whining
 And should bid you follow farther,
 Then how blest your fate !

Though ye greet us, tail a-quiver,
With too bold a paw,
That hath splashed the crystal river
O'er the golden floor,
Yet the prayer to us forbidden
On their lips shall not be chidden—
That ye plead without, and shiver
In the cold no more.

Butterflies

O'ER the hillside blithely playing,
 Butterflies, butterflies,
 Winging white before mine eyes,
 Fain would I arrest your straying—
 Bid you linger with me yet—
 But by none such idle wooing
 Can I grasp you ; he who tries
 Needs must own, for swift pursuing,
 Nimble foot and crafty net.

Fitful dreams and fleeting fancies,
 Butterflies, butterflies,
 Roving neath the southern skies,
 Drifting on a breeze that dances,
 Who can stay you as you pass ?
 He alone who, ease foregoing,
 Striveth long, nor toil denies.
 Shall such spoil be worth the showing
 When the sunlight quits the grass ?

Hark ! I hear a wafted warning,
 Butterflies, butterflies,
 ' Let us roam in wanton guise,
 Though we see no morrow's dawning
 And shall leave no trace behind.
 Let thy thoughts take flight unspoken ;
 Dreams made captive change to sighs
 When their wings fall limp and broken
 In a net of words entwined ! '

The Boring of the Well

O SOUL, what echoes have stirred thy
sleeping ?

The ring of steel on resisting stone—
The heavy fall of the soft soil heaping,
O'er bed and border and pathway thrown.
The tulips' banners once bravely flaunted,
Lie crushed and tattered, yet still undaunted
The leafless stem of the rose stands keeping
The long grey vigil of dawn alone.

Slowly, slowly, the earth unwilling
Doth yield her heart to the questing spade
That strikes yet deeper, nor spares the killing
Of weed or worm by its ruthless blade,
Till it reach the bourne that awaits its prising,
Where the hidden springs, from the depths
arising,
Thence flow and eddy, the dark void filling,
And heal the scars that the tool hath made.

And now the task of the spade is over—
The work complete that was wrought and
planned—
Go hide it well, with a stone to cover
That none may move with a heedless hand

Ere the lichen's gold and the green moss
mingle

Till slag and soil seem but one and single,
While the cloud-plumed wings of the May
winds hover,

And the iris wakes, by their pinions fanned.

Yet by the fence where the garden endeth
The pump stands plain, that when days are
dry,

Each one who forth from the village wendeth
With pail or pitcher, may pause thereby,
Nor question whence is the water's flowing
He seeks to quicken his spring-tide's sowing,
Or raise the stalk of a flower that bendeth
Athirst and frail 'neath a rainless sky.

Belated

A GARLAND I gathered for thee,
Thy brow to adorn—
White flower of the cinnamon tree,
Green leaf of the bay—
And, seeking, I stayed not to hear
Thy lingering footfall pass near,
Nor recked I of stone or of thorn
On thy way.

The blossoms I sought with long toil
To thee have I borne,
But weary wert thou for such spoil ;
Thou hast thrust them aside,
Thus sighing—‘ Nay, bring me not now
A wreath all too bright for my brow,
For noon may not grant what the morn
Hath denied ! ’

L'Asile de Notre Dame

WHAT though her lips be silent to thine ear
Whose heedless steps ring hollow round her
shrine?

May not their carven curve yet part to plead
For those who crave her aid to intercede? ·
Shall not such listening hearts a whisper hear
Unheard by thine?

What though her eyes be tearless to thy
sight—

Blind glass reflecting but the tinsel's sheen
That decks her robe?—shall they who
seamed each fold

With love and labour, in their depths behold
No softer radiance of transcendent light
By thee unseen?

Not unto thee her marvels may be wrought;
Not thine the wounds her hand hath power
to heal;

Since not divine, but woman still is she
Whose feet have climbed the brow of
Calvary;

What favour shall she deign to grant,
unsought,
What grace reveal?

How may she answer thee, O wayfarer,
 Who hast no word of praise or plea to tell ?
 Waits she not even as a woman waits,
 Tending the poor that gather round her gates,
 Yet unto him who asketh naught of her
 Implacable ?

Beholding heaven with unseeing eyes,
 And treading earth with unresponsive feet,
 Depart thou hence, lest scorn beget thee scorn;
 Vest with the woof of dreams thy soul out-
 worn,
 But here, where faith stands shrined, thy
 fantasies
 Are all unmeet.

The Third Trophy

THREE maidens went a-maying,
 Blithely straying,
 With lightsome laughter playing
 O'er mound and meadow green
 And through the palm-fringed thicket,
 Until they reached the wicket
 And paused thereby, delaying
 Where many paths are seen.

One goeth by the highway,
 One a by-way—
 'Along yon dusty dry way,'
 Quoth she, 'no hedgerows shine.'
 And one the river seeketh;
 Thus each to other speaketh—
 'My way shall not be thy way,
 My wreath be like to thine!'

They met, when skies were raining,
 Daylight waning;
 But stem and thorn remaining
 One bore, while one aside
 Had flung her chaplet wholly,
 And when the last came slowly—
 'She too shall walk complaining—
 What bringest thou?'—they cried.

‘ Beyond my reach, defying
All my trying,
Ungathered and undying
Still blooms my branch of May ;
Yet thence a spray of myrtle
I carry in my kirtle,
Whose green leaves ease my sighing
When all the world is grey ! ’

Glamour

FAIR western land, wherefrom we sailed
Across yon opal-tinted sea,
Thy shadowed shore now standeth veiled
In purple garb of mystery,
Yet day hath left her gift for thee—
A coronal of jewels wrought,
With the spent gold of sunlight bought.

O realm of yester-years that lies
Half dim, half lit, we thus behold
Thy lustrous peaks resplendent rise,
Thy capes and headlands flecked with gold,
But o'er thy plain the mist hath rolled,
And one by one the lights grow less
'Mid shadows of forgetfulness.

E'en though our feet that trod thy ways
Knew not yon glory o'er thy height
Of amber and of chrysoprase,
We reck not now, while, swift in flight,
Come dreams, like sea-birds winging white,
And on their pinions still doth rest
The self-same light that crowns each crest.

Solace

Now that once more I look upon his face,
 Speak not of anger that hath ceased to burn.
 May I not sorrow for a little space
 In this last hour which bringeth his return ?

I who have borne through many weary years
 The burden of his shame, uncomforted,
 Where may I check the flowing of such tears
 As fall for him, my son, who lieth dead ?

Beside no mountain torrents, flashing down
 O'er crag and boulder, may I find relief ;
 Their swirl and eddy shall not serve to drown
 The bitter waters of a deeper grief.

Amid no starry solitudes I seek
 The peace and steadfast courage of the night ;
 Such strength shall surely scorn his spirit
 weak
 That failed and faltered ere it gained the
 height.

Nor yet where larch and pine stand sentinel
 To guard the rock-hewn path that winds
 below—

Not there, where last I waved to him
 farewell,
 So long ago—so very long ago !

But where the dancing shadows fleck the
 street
 Beneath the lilacs where the children play,
 I listen for the echo of his feet
 Set free from school—methinks but yester-
 day.

And once again I hear his voice ring high
 In sudden laughter, clear through all the rest,
 While o'er them flits a yellow butterfly,
 And he springs foremost in the fruitless quest.

Say, shall it harm them if they bring me now
 The bluebells gathered in the woodland ways,
 To weave a wreath for him, about whose
 brow
 No laurel twines, nor crown of victor's bays ?

Yea ! these shall be their gift, whose feet
 shall pass
 In after days unheeding ; so may he
 Rest unrebuked, while o'er the rain-washed
 grass
 The little breezes blow to comfort me.

Little Brown Demon

A LITTLE brown demon so softly crept
Where the litter of puppies dwell ;
He pinched their ears, and no more they
slept—

One pull the cloth from the table swept,
And the pitcher in fragments fell.
Ah! dire mishap!—yet each tongue doth lap
The milk as it gushes down.
We cry alack ! for an imp so black,
But in truth he is only brown.

The little brown demon, he sat a-curl
On the bench of the village school ;
One word he whispered to boy and girl,
And schemes of frolic make each brain
whirl,
Forgetful of desk and stool.
Though we might think him as black as ink
On seeing the master's frown,
A truant beam through the pane doth gleam
To shine on his coat of brown.

That little brown demon, though years glide
by,
While puppy is changed to hound,

And boy to man, he shall still lurk nigh
To tempt our hearts with a whisper sly,
As long as the world spins round.
Yet though we quail at his horns and tail
And the fame of his far renown,
We still shall trust that, if meet we must,
We'll find him, not black, but brown !

Beyond

BEYOND youth's fragrant mead, who journeys
 slow,
 Seeking, athirst beneath a scorching sky,
 Some hidden pool, but finds its springs no less
 Salt with the brine of old-time bitterness
 Than are those tears, through which shall
 he descry
 His mirrored image from the depths below
 Rise up in mockery.

Beyond the waste of sorrow who doth fare,
 Wherein his eyes behold no comrade's face,
 Nor guiding track athwart the wind-swept
 sand,
 But, when he sees the strong hills steadfast
 stand,
 Learneth at last that unto no new place
 He cometh, for the firmer ground shall bear
 Another footprint's trace.

Beyond yon heights—who would that region
 tread
 Must ford alone, beset by hazard sore,
 The swirling stream that surges, deep and wide,
 Beneath their range, but he who stems its tide—
 Shall he not grasp their hands who crossed
 before,
 Whom, seeing not, he yet hath followèd
 Unto the further shore ?

Printanière

I FARED afar to seek the Spring,
 Ere yet her feet drew nigh ;
 Within my soul her summons stirred
 Before the cuckoo's note was heard.
 I might not bide her tarrying
 Beneath a Northern sky.

I wooed her where the wild rose twined
 Above our sunlit path,
 Till once at noon, in sudden dread,
 I looked, and lo ! she thence had fled.
 The whisper of a wearied wind
 Bore word of aftermath—

‘ Dry droops the grass ; along yon shore
 All vainly were she sought.
 Go hence, before thine eyes behold
 The scorched mimosa's scattered gold
 Fall down in dust, wherewith no store
 Of gladness may be bought.’

Not in such wise, O heart of mine,
 Might Spring beside thee stay,
 Who as a maiden dallieth,
 Yet hears not love amid the breath
 Of airs which move not palm or pine
 That fringe a halcyon bay.

Where sterner blasts around thee rise,
And rain-swept hills stretch bare,
Wait thou the coming of her feet,
Not wholly strange, but yet more sweet,
With softer radiance in her eyes—
New flowers to deck her hair.

Reunion

BORNE on the restless tide that seaward flows
I fled from haven, seeking through such
 flight
To breathe the rapture of the star-crowned
 height,
And crush her crimson secret from the rose,
For all save this seemed worthless in my
 sight.

What is the end of all my wayfaring ?
To list at eve unto the bittern's cry—
An empty echo through the darkening sky,
Wherein the stars reveal me no new thing,
Ere dawn, bereft of promise, draweth nigh ?

Nay ! but to lift mine eyes at noon, and see
Athwart the sunlight on the river's plain
The shadow of your presence fall again ;
Above the waters lapping wearily,
To hear your voice that calls—not now in
 vain !

Wherefore, what need of further speech or
 song ?
Too long my plaint hath vexed the Southern
 skies,
But now once more in gladness I arise
To seek the North ; so may my feet be
 strong
Upon our road that yet untrodden lies.

Envoi

O ROSES, torn untimely from the tree,
 How many of your blooms lie crushed and
 killed,
 Ere yet yon slender crystal flask may be
 With attar filled !

O dreams that wing from out the void,
 unsought,
 How myriad and how fugitive ye throng,
 Before one vagrant fantasy be caught
 And caged in song !

Bewail not, blossoms, your brief hour of
 pride,
 Whose essence shall endure when June is
 past,
 Nor strive to break song's snare, ye dreams
 that bide
 Of all, the last.

VERSES FOR RECITATION

The Caravacca Cross

(Metal crosses which have been blessed in the chapel at Caravacca are greatly treasured in certain parts of Spain. It is believed that in token of Divine support and protection each of these Crosses will miraculously open when trouble or great danger approaches its possessor.)

HE heard a rousing summons ; to his
fevered soul it spake—

‘ *Ramón, Ramón Alvarez !*

Waste not thy days in sorrow for a faithless
woman’s sake.

Thy promised bride is stolen by thy brother’s
treachery ;

She is his wife, and thou art fooled ; reproach
and rage are vain.

Go hence ! Thy manhood bids thee rise and
strike a blow for Spain,

Where foes assail her flag, in Cuba’s isle
beyond the sea.’

So he rode away at dawn from Caravacca.

A league he scarce had ridden, when his
mother spoke his name—

‘ *Ramón ! ay, hijo mio !* ’

Bowed down with toil and care, unto her
venta door she came.

‘One gift,’ she cried, ‘at parting, let your
mother’s hand bestow—

The cross the priest hath blessed, that is
fashioned thus in twain,

Though the halves be nailed together, till
they seem but one again—

I charge you, wear and guard it when you
face your country’s foe,

While my prayers arise for you from
Caravacca.

‘In your hour of darkest peril, in your time of
sternest need,

Ramón, ah caro mio,

If your soul be purged from tremor, and
your heart be pure indeed,

A sign shall be vouchsafed you, and a miracle
revealed ;

These nails will part asunder, till the cross
be opened wide,

In token that a blessing shall descend and
shall abide.

Our Saints shall keep their vigil o’er the
blazing battlefield,

As o’er the peaceful shrine of Caravacca.’

‘Scant faith have I in miracle, in Saint or
priestly spell,

Madre, O madre mia !

Yet, if it brings you solace, I will guard
your gift right well.’

So spake he, and before her on the path he
 bent to kneel,
 While she tied the silken cord that hung the
 cross upon his breast.
 ‘At least for me,’ said he, ‘it shall a truer
 token rest
 Than the rose whose leaves I scattered with
 a curse beneath my heel—
 Her gift who drives me forth from Caravacca.’

He scarce had gained the stirrup, when there
 rose another call—

‘Ramón, Ramón Alvarez!’

Beneath the oleanders that drooped o’er a
 garden wall

A quick ear caught his coming, and Carlota
 checked her song.

‘Will you speak no word of parting, even
 now, to me?’ she cried.

He saw his brother Pablo standing silent by
 her side,

And he gave no sign nor answer, as he
 spurred his mule along

The mountain track that led from Caravacca.

‘The Saints may work their miracles, but
 such are not for me,

Ramón, Ramón Alvarez!’

So mused he, when the war was done, and
 came the hard decree

That Cuba’s soil must yield unto a foreign
 mastery.

‘ My mother’s cross stays cold and closed ;
in vain I solace crave.

Not mine the pride of conquest, nor for me
a soldier’s grave.’

And years fled on, until at last, beneath a
midnight sky,

He rode again the path to Caravacca.

A league the town lay distant, when a well-
known voice rang shrill—

‘ *Aqui ! O viajero !* ’

Once more Carlota called him from the
garden on the hill.

She ran and seized his bridle, and her eyes
were wild with fear.

‘ My husband lies sore stricken by a falling
tree-trunk’s blow

That spent its weight upon him while he
tilled the ground below.

He is in peril ; I must stay to watch beside
him here—

O ride and bring me aid from Caravacca ! ’

He turned his face towards her ; from her
lips there broke a cry—

‘ *Ramón ! Ramón Alvarez !*

I knew you not, when thus I prayed your
help in charity.

Ah ! cursed the hour that brings you back
to mock me in my need !

No stranger could have failed me now, yet
 you will not forgive ;
 The power is yours to save him—but you
 would not have him live !
 Revenge is here at last—begone !—but this
 I bid you heed—
 Return no more, thus shamed, to Caravacca !'

A moment stood he silent, with a frown
 upon his brow.

' *Carlota, ah ! Carlota,*
 Your words are hard, but time is short for
 speech between us now.
 An act shall be my answer ; for none other
 can I stay !'
 He urged his mule to hasten, while from
 out the shrouded skies
 He heard the sullen murmur of a coming
 storm arise,
 And a flash of lightning quivered like a
 sword, to point the way
 Towards the distant walls of Caravacca.

.
 ' Whence ride you hither through the
 tempest's wrath this fearsome night,
Ramón, Ramón Alvarez ?

Like some wild spectre fleeing from a last
 disastrous fight ?'—
 The surgeon from his casement spoke to him
 who knocked below.

In hurried words the tale was told ; the
boon was not denied.

‘Bring round my mule and saddle quick !’
the surgeon loudly cried.

‘Alvarez, come you with me, lest the house
I might not know ;
These rain-squalls blind the eyes at Caravacca.’

About their feet the lightning cracked ;
above their heads it played.

‘*Señor, Señor, cuidado !*’

The trembling mules could scarce proceed,
so sore were they dismayed ;

They stumbled on the rugged track ; scant
foothold there was found.

The track ? was this a pathway ?—nay, a
rushing river’s bed

O’erflowing with the torrent as its waters
downward sped ;

From height to height each answering peal
of thunder echoed round

The sombre hills that quaked o’er Caravacca.

‘Now, by Our Lady’s blessed shrine, this is
no night to ride,

Ramón, Ramón Alvarez !’

His comrade pointed to a cleft within the
mountain side.

‘There lies my brother’s house,’ said he, and,
breathless onward led.

One last fierce flash shot splendid through
the sheet of blinding rain ;

It struck the cross Alvarez wore, and
shattered it in twain.

‘The sign hath come at last !’ he cried—and
with that cry fell dead

Before his boyhood’s home by Caravacca.

.

A woman’s wail rose piercing when the storm
was spent and o’er—

‘*Ramón, ay ! hijo mio !*’

His mother’s arms were round him, scarce
a stone’s throw from her door ;

The cross the skies had riven wide shone
bright upon his breast.

Forth came Carlota wondering — ‘My
husband sleeps ; be still !’

The mother rose, and pointed to that form
so stark and chill.

‘He also sleeps,’ she answered, ‘and the
Saints guard well his rest,

Who met his death for you at Caravacca.’

The Bell of Bosham

(To Bosham, near Chichester, belongs a legend that a church bell, stolen thence by the Danes, may still on Sundays be heard ringing from the depths of the sea in unison with its fellows on shore.)

‘Ho! sons of the North!’ roared Wulff
 the Dane
 To his clamorous Jomsburg crew,
 ‘We’ve sailed far seas ’neath the flag of
 Sweyn,
 But there’s goodly spoil upon yonder plain
 That spreadeth so fair to view.’

They shipped their oars—so the old tales tell,
 While rang from the Church tower tall,
 The Bosham chimes, and they heard right
 well
 The rhythmic note of the tenor bell,
 More clear and more sweet than all.

While ever the breezes seaward bore
 Its melody rich and deep,
 Dark scowled the Jarl, and again he swore—
 ‘Ere a moon hath waned, by the beard of
 Thor,
 It shall waken a Viking’s sleep.’

They have reached the shore, they have
 scaled the tower,
 They have severed the ropes in twain ;
 They have seized the bell, while the pale
 priests cower,
 ' A grim foretaste of the Northmen's power,'
 Quoth Wulff, ' till we come again !'

Adown the creek, with the ebbing tide,
 'Mid laughter, the Danes made speed,
 But the monks knelt low by the water side,
 ' Oh good Saint Nicholas,' loud they cried,
 ' Give ear in our hour of need !'

A cloud hath darkened the distant sky,
 And shadowed the swelling main ;
 The storm winds wail, and the waves leap
 high ;
 Like wheeling pinions the broad sails fly,
 Yet shelter they seek in vain.

' What curse lies o'er us ? what Warlock's
 spell
 Pursueth our course with fear ?'
 Out spake the Jarl, ' 'Tis that stolen bell !
 We must yield it now, lest it sound our knell,
 Such gift shall the gods hold dear !'

They raised it high while the lightnings pale
 Smote hauberk and blade and crest ;

They hurled it far o'er their vessel's rail,
And a silence fell on the swirling gale
As it sank 'neath the waves to rest.

And still to-day, when the Church chimes
ring

In cadence o'er land and sea,
The winds will shoreward an echo bring
From the sunken bell that the billows swing
To join in their harmony.

All Hallowe'en

ROSE and vervain and myrtle,
With a spray of the jasmine's flower
She hath twined together to deck her brow,
And to the turret she hies her now
As chimeth the midnight hour.

She hath ta'en her seat by the mirror ;
No charm hath she left untried
Whereby to summon before her sight
The image true, on this mystic night,
Of him who shall claim her bride.

What breath hath parted the arras,
And flickered the taper's ray ?
Amid the shadows she shrank in fear,
While the hollow sound of a step drew near,
And paused on its stealthy way.

What face hath the glass reflected,
Seen dim through her clouded hair ?
Not knight or baron of high degree,
But a dead man's wraith from the far cold sea
Hath risen to greet her there !

A shriek that shattered the silence
Broke forth from her lips in dread—

‘Can no fate sever, and no grave hide !
I scorned him living, but now,’ she cried,
‘He cometh to claim me, dead !’

.

A gay laugh echoed in answer—
‘No ghost from the sighing main
Thou seest pass on thy castle stair.
The sea is strong, but the sea can spare—
Come forth, unfearing, O maiden fair,
And welcome me home again !’

Tarifa

(These lines refer to the celebrated defence of Tarifa against the Moors, 1286. The Spanish commander, Don Alonzo Perez de Guzman, being summoned to surrender the Fortress in exchange for the life of his son, who had been made captive through a love affair with a Moorish lady, indignantly refused the demand, and flung his own sword over the battlements for his son's execution.)

A MOSLEM Chief hath ridden to Tarifa's
 frowning wall,
 Whereon the Spanish knights defied the
 fierce invaders' thrall ;
 Quoth he, 'The Moorish king
 A rich reward will bring
 As ransom for this city in the hour that it
 shall fall.'

Loud laughed Alonzo Guzman, as he scorn-
 ful answer gave—
 'Well may such bribe be proffered, when
 the fight ye will not brave !
 While one shall yet remain
 To guard our flag from stain
 The banner of Castile above Tarifa's towers
 shall wave.'

Again the Moorish messenger the strong-
hold gate hath sought :

‘ Thus saith my master—if so be thou
countest wealth as nought,
Then wilt *thou* tribute pay,
And he his hand will stay
Before these walls be shattered, and thy
pride to dust be brought ? ’

But up rose Don Alonzo, and in blazing
wrath spake he—

‘ Return to him who sent thee hence, and
say that victory
With weight of shameful gold
Is neither bought nor sold,
But with men’s blood like wine outpoured,
ere Spain once more be free ! ’

The dusk to dark had deepened, when from
out the citadel
Alonzo’s love-lorn son stole past the
weary sentinel.

O Zora ! maid most rare,
Hast wrought a wilful snare ?
Or was thy beauty guileless, that hath cast
so strong a spell ?

A third time came the envoy, when the
dawn was in the sky ;
With vaunting arrogance he spake—‘ New
tidings here bring I—

Thy son, proud Spaniard, stands
 As hostage in our hands ;
 Now yield for blood if not for gold, or he
 to-night shall die ! ’

Upon the Spanish host there fell the silence
 of dismay
 ‘ Too great,’ they thought, ‘ this price must
 prove for mortal man to pay ! ’
 One glance the father cast,
 Where bound with fetters fast,
 And shamed amid exultant foes, his son
 a captive lay.

Then Guzman’s hand his sword-hilt sought
 —a murmur filled the air :
 ‘ Woe, woe, that in the stain of such
 surrender we should share ! ’
 But scarce that sound was heard
 Before his answering word
 Pealed forth in bold defiance like a trumpet’s
 ringing blare.

‘ Sword of my Sires, I yield thee thus, to
 other hands than mine ;
 One last stern service for the land that
 forged thee, must be thine ! ’
 Far o’er the fortress wall
 The steel flashed blue, to fall
 Amid the blazoned tents that rose to mark
 the Moslem line.

‘Ye doom my son to shameful death before
to-morrow’s light,

Wreak ye your will !—My sword awaits ye
there wherewith to smite.

Learn now, and thus reply—

Nor gold, nor blood, can buy

The thing that stands though all else fail—
the honour of a knight.’

The siege was raised ; Alonzo’s king himself
rides forth to greet

His entry into Alcalà, to grant him honour
meet,

While by the city gate

Spain’s fairest daughters wait

To crown his helm with laurel, and fling
flowers before his feet.

His King bestowed the richest lands that
vine and olive bore

Between the Guadalquivir and the Guadalete’s
shore.

‘A royal gift !’ he sighed,

‘Yet not yon river’s tide

Shall sweep away my sorrow, nor my son to
me restore.’

The Mazard Bowl

(In former times the belief was prevalent in Wales that whoever should quaff the contents of the Mazard Bowl, thereby took on his own soul the sins of the dead man, at whose demise it was prepared.)

‘A STOUN of foaming ale I’ll drain!’ thus
young Llewellyn cried,

‘And pledge therein the fairest maid that
dwells by Teify side!’

But as he reined before the inn, with joyful
comrades three,

The landlord’s daughter in the porch sat
weeping bitterly.

‘Ah! woe is me! my father’s soul unshriven
hence hath fled;

Too late the priest shall seek him now; he
lieth stark and dead!

The world hath deemed him stern and
harsh, yet unto me alone

His speech held naught but kindness, and
his anger ne’er was shown.’

From off his steed Llewellyn sprang; in
gentle tones he spake—

‘Scant favour hath thy father shown to me,
yet for thy sake

His death I mourn, and fain would strive
thy sorrow to relieve;

If I in ought could proffer aid, less sorely
should’st thou grieve.’

She raised her tear-wet eyes to his—‘Nay !
mock not my despair !

One deed alone may solace me, and that
will no man dare.

Beside the bier the Mazard Bowl stands
filled yet still unquaffed.

But ah ! ’twere vain to bid thee drain yon
dark and potent draught !

‘With secret rites of grammerie, and spells
of wizard’s lore

Hath rosemary, vervain, and the juice of
hellebore

Been mingled there, and whosoe’er his thirst
therewith shall slake,

The burden of a dead man’s guilt upon his
soul shall take !’

He strode within ; he seized the cup, ‘I
sought this morn,’ quoth he

‘A tankard of thy choicest ale to pledge
a health to thee,

But now at thy behest this charmed draught
be mine instead,

So shall thy father rest in peace, his sins be
on my head !’

Full deep drank he ; the empty bowl at last
he flung aside

‘Now is my task fulfilled, may I not claim
reward ?’ he cried ;

‘Have I not earned one smile from thee?’—
 but in her eyes there shone
 No answering light to greet the love that
 kindled in his own.

With trembling hand she pointed, and across
 the threshold white,
 He saw his noontide shadow shrink, and
 slowly fade from sight,
 He heard his comrades mount in haste;
 along the sunlit street
 Faint grew the throbbing echo of their horses’
 flying feet.

A bitter cry broke from him. ‘Dost thou
 also shrink from me,
 O thankless heart, for thee I sinned, if sin
 in truth this be!’
 But dumb in dread she faced him, till with
 lips grown pale through fear,
 ‘Depart, accursèd one!’ she cried; ‘thou
 shalt not linger here!’

‘Farewell,’ he said. ‘Be mine henceforth
 the burden of this deed.
 To me alone the way was shown to serve
 thy direst need.
 I count the cost of two worlds lost but
 light if this may win
 Thy peace in life, his peace in death, whose
 soul I freed from sin.’

The Martyr

THEY have loosened the shackles that bound
him, and lifted the chains from his feet,
Still striving at last to confound him :—‘O
fool, is thy stubbornness meet ?

Thou hast fought, but we conquer ; now
yield thee ; for faith from the flame
shall not shield thee.’

But the voice of the mob rose around him
with menace that urged not retreat.

Uprose he with limbs that were leaden,
though not at that clamour they quailed.

‘Full deep lie your dungeons to deaden the
spirit which fain had prevailed ;

Not now by its breath may be kindled that
beacon whose glory hath dwindled,

Grown grey ere yon faggot shall redden—
the light of a faith that hath failed.

‘Yet, deem ye that thus ye have tamed me
to shrink from the oath I have sworn,

And, outcast ’mid serfs who have shamed
me, to creep through your cities forlorn,

With eyes that are blinded of vision—a butt
for your beck and derision,

O hands that have tortured and maimed me,
O lips that have laughed me to scorn ?

'The lees of the winecup that flashes lie bitter
 and black to encrust ;
 The steel of the sword-blade that slashes
 may crumble at last into rust ;
 The drums of the vanguard beat hollow—
 yet nathless their summons I follow
 Till flame shall be ended in ashes, and flesh
 shall descend into dust.

'I list to the tumbril that creaketh ; the skies
 are unstirred by a breath,
 But my soul through their silence yet
 speaketh, and this is the word that it
 saith,
 "Though saint and though seraphim spurn
 thee, this boon thine allegiance shall
 earn thee,
 That freedom thy manhood still seeketh—
 the right to the roadway of death."

'Though I hold but a dream that hath broken,
 yet greater than truth is its lie ;
 I turn to your law for a token—yon stake
 pointeth grim to the sky.
 For those unto whom He abideth, in scorn
 of the foe that derideth,
 By the God I have lost have I spoken, and
 now as a man let me die.'

Erect and unmoved to surrender he stood
 in the multitude's sight,

One spear of swift fire shot up slender,—
then, east of the prison's barred height
The flame of new day flashed immortal, and
victor he passed through that portal,
While death shod his feet with her splendour,
and dawn crowned his brow with her
light.

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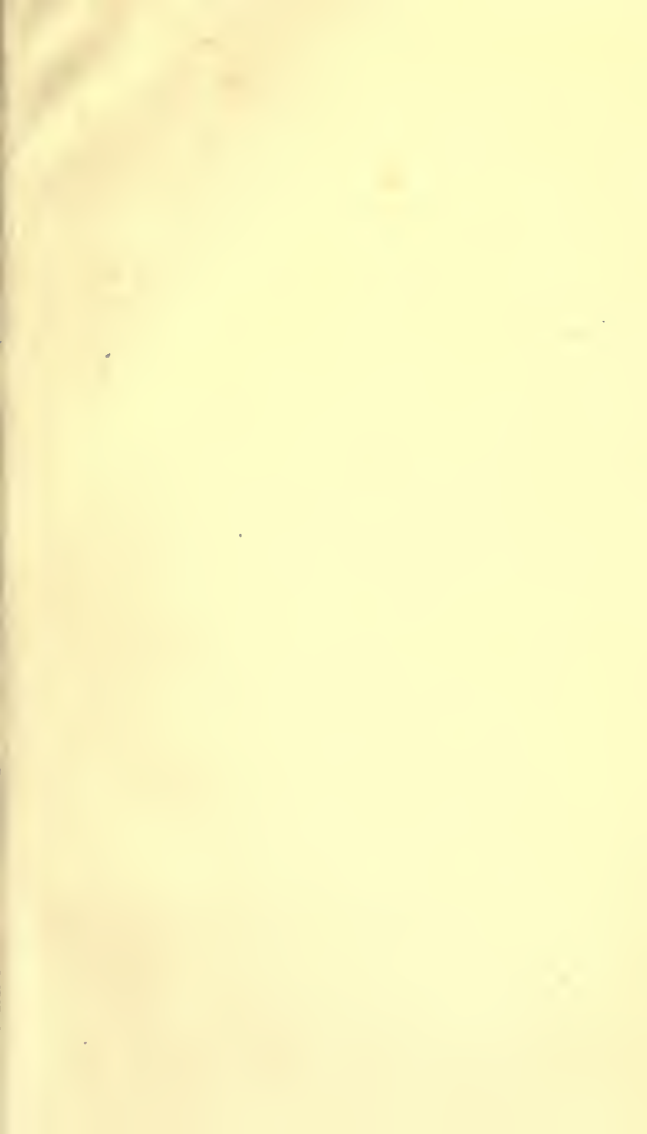
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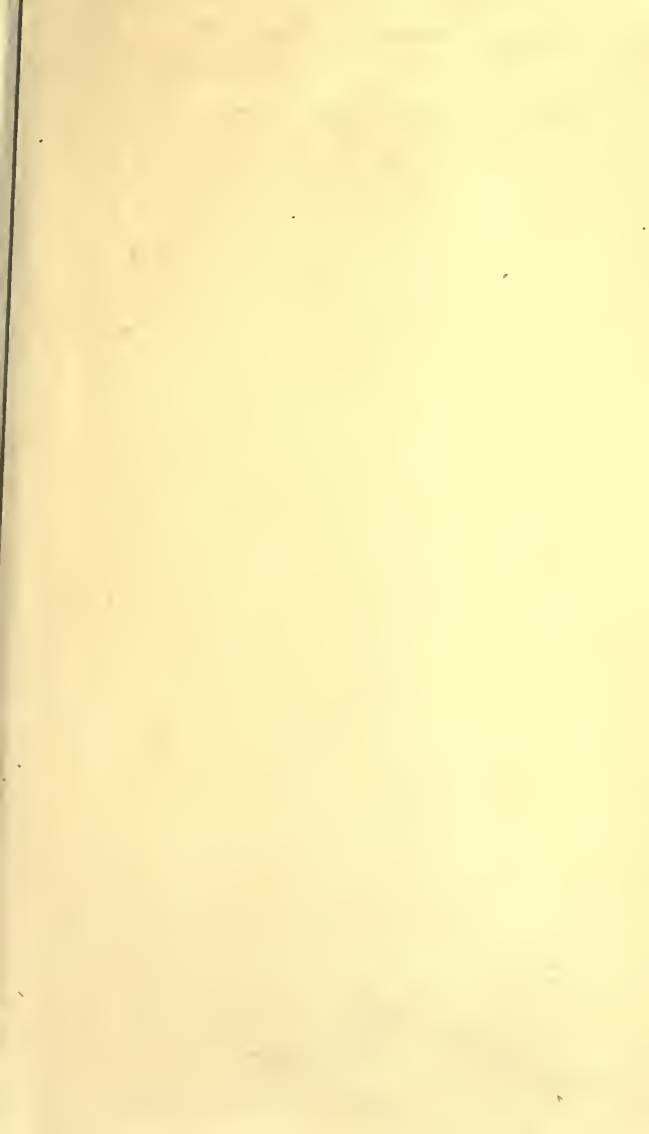
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